

What is claimed is:

1. A retractor especially adapted for placement of a pedicle screw within a patient, comprising:

a guide portion having a guide channel extending longitudinally therealong, said guide portion having a first and second end;

5 a handle connected angularly with respect to said first end of said guide portion; and
an insert configured to fit within said guide channel, said insert having an aperture extending lengthwise therethrough, said aperture having a diameter sized to accommodate a tool being inserted therethrough.

2. The device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising means for stabilizing said retractor against a lateral aspect of a facet of a paraspinous musculature of the patient.

3. The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said second end of said guide portion includes at least one projection extending therefrom for assisting in anchoring the guide portion within the surgical area.

4. The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said guide portion includes a medial face positioned adjacent said second end thereof, said medial face having a medial service formed with texturing thereon.

5. The device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising grooves formed within said guide channel for receiving at least one base edge of said insert.

6. The device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an image tracker mounted to said retractor.

7. A retractor for placement of a pedicle screw, comprising:

a guide portion including a guide channel;

an insert configured to fit within said guide channel, said insert having a hollow bore extending lengthwise therethrough, said bore having a diameter sized to accommodate a tool

5 inserted therethrough; and

means for stabilizing said insert within said guide channel.

8. The device as claimed in claim 7, wherein said guide channel includes a distal end, said distal end having at least one projection extending therefrom.

9. The device as claimed in claim 7, wherein said guide portion includes a medial face positioned adjacent said second end thereof, said medial face having a medial service formed with texturing thereon.

10. The device as claimed in claim 7, further comprising an image tracker mounted to said retractor.

11. A surgical retractor for guiding implantation of a pedicle screw within a patient's spine, comprising:

a guide portion having a guide channel, said guide channel sized to accommodate a pedicle screw for implanting in the patient, said guide portion having a distal end; and

5 means for stabilizing the distal end of said guide portion against a lateral aspect of a facet of a paraspinous musculature of the patient.

12. The device as claimed in claim 11, further comprising an elongated insert configured to fit within said guide channel, said insert having an aperture extending lengthwise therethrough.

13. The device as claimed in claim 12, further comprising grooves formed on said guide channel for receiving at least one base edge of said insert.

14. The device as claimed in claim 11, further comprising an image tracker mounted to said retractor.

15. The device as claimed in claim 11, further comprising a semi-circular opening sized to accommodate a pedicle screw at said distal end of said guide portion.

16. In combination, a retractor especially adapted for spinal surgery and an image tracker, said combination comprising:

a retractor having a guide portion and a guide channel portion extending longitudinally therealong;

5 a handle connected to said guide portion; and

an image tracker connected to said handle, wherein the image tracker allows the guide channel to be aligned on the surgical site.

17. The combination as claimed in claim 16, further comprising an insert configured to fit within said guide channel, said insert having an aperture extending lengthwise therethrough, said aperture having a diameter sized to accommodate a tool inserted therethrough.

18. The combination as claimed in claim 17, wherein said tool is a tap.

19. The combination as claimed in claim 18, wherein said insert includes a proximal opening sized to prevent a larger diameter section of said tap from passing into said aperture.

20. A method for placing a pedicle screw, comprising:

providing a retractor including a guide portion having first and second ends, said guide portion including a guide channel, said guide portion having a handle operatively connected thereto;

5 placing said guide portion so as to extend from a skin surface of a patient to a dorsal aspect of a vertebra over a pedicle of said patient;

manipulating said handle so as to maintain a position of said guide portion against a lateral aspect of a facet of a paraspinous musculature of said patient;

10 inserting an insert into said channel of said retractor, said insert having a hollow bore sized to accommodate a tool selected from the group consisting of a drill bit, a tap for a pedicle and a probe;

utilizing the tool to complete a desired surgical step within a surgical procedure;

removing said insert after utilizing said tool; and

inserting a pedicle screw into said pedicle.